come forward very readily to help those who need it. It is common to suspect others' motives; and not unusual to be always on the alert to read hidden meanings into the seemingly innocent utterances of others. Analysis of their life-histories shows that the people are not given to introspection. They are always on the defensive; but their inter-personal relations are not characterized by detachment. In their thoughts, likes and dislikes they are quite open, and all persons having even casual contacts have a fair acquaintance with one anothers' ideas and attitudes

It is not uncommon for people to analyse and describe the personality-traits of other inhabitants of the village as well as of outsiders coming into the settlement. Positive qualities, having obvious approval, find expression in such epithets as: 'good person', 'hard-working', 'honest', 'respectable', 'well-behaved', 'intelligent', 'generous' or 'large-hearted' and 'faithful'. Epithets describing negative traits which do not meet with social approval are many and varied, and among others include: 'bad person', 'lazy', 'dishonest', 'shameless', 'mannerless', 'foolish', 'miserly', 'small-hearted', 'unfaithful', 'good-for-nothing', 'liar', 'all talk but no deeds', 'ill-tempered', etc. Analysis of such traits is firmly established in the culture-pattern, and occupies an important place in the conversation of the people when they meet in small groups. Although conformity to social norms is idealized and emphasized, when there is a breach of traditional ways the person responsible likes to confess it in confidence to someone else. Long conversations and the mutual sharing of secrets are quite frequent. However, when friendships break up the sanctity of earlier secrets is not protected by any code of honour. Within limits originality and innovation are admired; but excess and ostentation soon lead to social censure and ridicule.

Subjects coming under the critical eye of society are: (i) breaches of traditional norms, (ii) display and exhibitionism, (iii) sexuality, (iv) efforts to rise in the power hierarchy, (v) conspicuous success, and (vi) originality and 'too many new ideas'. Carrying tales and 'whispering about the doings in others' houses' go on in the community on a wide scale. It is criticized by the aggrieved persons and their sympathizers, but no one regards it as inherently bad. 'Incidents' or breaches of established norms are discussed in small conversational groups at first, and the more important ones among them gradually filter through and reach the respon-

sible village elders. Few such breaches escape the attention of society, although in many of them no action may be called for by the caste or village elders. Display and ostentation are severely criticized in the community. Individuals inviting social censure for this fault are frequently nicknamed and mimicked. The behaviour of persons who have just come into wealth or a position of authority is subjected to a particularly critical scrutiny. Sexuality, in all its different aspects, provides another popular theme for gossip. Although bragging about unusual potency and sexual adventures is very common, in general the community watches and comments upon all abnormalities, particularly excessive indulgence and lack of adequate sex vigour. The comments of the group in this sphere too are merciless. Those who are on the higher rungs of the ladder of power hierarchy jealously watch their own position, and anyone casting a covetous eye on a position of influence at once becomes the target of the criticism of several pressure groups in the community. People attaining conspicuous success are invariably the subject of malicious criticism. Their actions and speech are closely watched and later commented upon. Opportunities for taunting them are eagerly sought, and indirect references to their humble origin are frequently made. Finally, persons having too many novel and original ideas also invite the criticism of society. While people are unsparing in their comments, they are very much reserved in their praise.

Anger is freely expressed. Loud shouting, use of foul language, and occasional physical violence are the principal channels for the expression of aggressiveness. Sentiments of love and friendship too are publicly expressed; the only exception in this case being the suppression of all sentiments suggesting sexual intimacy.

Concepts of 'manliness' and 'defending the honour' play a significant part in governing inter-personal relations within the community. It is not manly to beat anyone who is too young, too aged, weak or infirm. On the contrary, a fight between equals is always considered fair; although it may necessitate action on the part of village elders. Notions of personal and family prestige differ in different castes, as well as at different income levels. Any challenge to personal prestige or family honour is bound to arouse a violent reaction.

Truth and straightforwardness are acclaimed as social ideals; but intelligent and ingenious ways of deception too receive

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

577 unmistakable appreciation. Cowardice and treachery are condemned, but people still indulge in malicious gossip and back-
152 biting. Mutual suspicion characterizes the general nature of inter-personal relations. Two families on the road to prosperity are likely to be jealous of each other; but adversity almost never fails to bring them nearer and closer. Exercising little control over their emotions, people get excited very quickly; anger and friendship are both aroused in them with equal ease.

571 A study of inter-group relations will give us a better idea of the nature and quality of the attitudes that largely govern inter-personal relations in the community. For this we shall first examine the inter-caste attitudes embodied in stereotypes, and later analyse similar attitudes and opinions covering two sets of rival groups—educated and uneducated, and those with urban contacts and those without them.

564 INTER-CASTE ATTITUDES: SOME STEREOTYPES

186 Inter-caste attitudes find expression in several stereotypes which [522] are a part of the thought patterns of the people, and find expression both in jest and banter as well as in quarrels and outbursts of anger. Among others, the following stereotypes and related anecdotes were noted in Shamirpet.

The Brahmin is 'pious from outside, but not so at heart'. He is 'tricky and calculating'. 'He instigates people, but always keeps himself in the background.'

The Komti is 'a born coward, but a shrewd business man'. 'When he says anything on oath, take it that he is telling a deliberate falsehood.' 'He spares no ingenuity to save even a counterfeit coin.' 'Gods do not penalize a Komti for telling lies, he is born to do that.' The anecdotes concerning the miserliness of the Komtis are indeed many and varied. 'If a fly falls in butter-milk, rich people will throw the butter-milk away, the poor will throw away the fly and drink the butter-milk. But the Komti squeezes out the butter-milk before throwing the fly away.' 'If a relation comes to the house of a Komti and the time of the evening meal approaches, he will think, "If this guest goes home, I shall be able to save one meal." The guest on the other hand thinks, "If I stay here a little while more, one meal will be saved at home." And a battle of wits goes on to save just one meal.' The stories of their